Maths and English Strategy

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1. Mission

1.1 Our mission is to ensure that we provide consistent and regular opportunities for our students to improve their skills in English and mathematics, embedding these skills so that students are supported to develop and apply them confidently in all aspects of learning, providing a strong foundation upon which to build further learning, work and career advancement.

2. Rationale

2.1 At UCQ, we want our students to improve their confidence and competence in English and maths skills so that they can function independently in all aspects of their personal and professional life. These are the skills that are essential for both progression to and within employment or to further study. We recognise that learners arrive with diverse experiences, strengths and confidence levels in maths and English, and that progress may look different for different individuals

3. Context

3.1 UCQ works in a number of communities that experience disadvantage, where learners may have had fewer opportunities to fully develop maths and English skills. Further, we understand that our employer customers require workers who are competent and this includes in the tasks that require maths and English skills within job roles. We also understand that maths and English skills are the baseline for learning and development and have significant positive impacts in both work and personal life; they are therefore key for social and economic inclusion. Likewise, we seek to ensure that we understand learner competence in maths and English and avoid any unnecessary repetition of learning provision.

3.2 'Making Maths and English Work for All' is a major research work by the Education and Training Foundation. It gives the outcomes of an extensive consultation with 1400 employers in England, which found that, of those employers that had experience of Functional Skills training and qualifications, 87% valued them and saw significant value in developing contextualised skills for workers, including, for example, having 'a firm grasp of units of measurement; and skills such as mental arithmetic and approximation, listening, writing and speaking. There was a strong desire for provision which equips people with practical and applied skills–and employers are concerned that a lack of these skills could impact on business.'

4. Specific Learning Differences (including Dyslexia)

4.1 Support strategies are agreed with learners and tailored to individual need; no single adjustment is assumed to be appropriate for all learners with dyslexia or related needs.

4.2 We are fully committed to removing barriers to learning for all students. We ensure that all students with a statemented diagnosis of dyslexia or with difficulties reflective of dyslexia are equipped to access the full curriculum regardless of their difficulties. Where appropriate, adult/peer support is used to develop and support others. Classrooms are managed so that students are seated at the front of the class and near help if needed. Classrooms are well lit; managed and organised.

4.3 Tutor/Trainers are aware of a wide range of teaching and learning approaches and make use of a variety of appropriate approaches during lessons, which aide inclusion and support

effective learning. Tutor/trainers avoid asking students to copy from the board wherever possible. Dyslexic students are given notes on cream/preferred coloured paper. Tutor/Trainers use a dyslexic friendly font for all resources. Written work is marked in relation to content and to their specific targets and needs. Spelling is supported as part of individual targets.

4.4 Screening

4.4.1 Students are given a short written checklist to ascertain whether the student has any Dyslexic, dyspraxia or visual stress indicators. Anyone deemed to have significant indicators will be contacted by the designated tutor to discuss support options.

4.5 Initial assessment

4.5.1 All students will undertake a maths and English initial assessment and a dyslexia screening checklist.

4.5.2 The initial assessments will be delivered by designated and trained staff prior to induction and enrolment. Staff undertaking initial assessment will issue documentation, showing the date of assessment and outcomes, to students and will confirm:

- What the assessment outcome means (in relation to component skill areas and indicated level of competence)
- the level the student is recommended to work towards, where development is required.
- that the student meets the entry level requirement in English or maths, where one is set as an entry criteria to their target programme (e.g. an Apprenticeship)
- whether the review of prior qualifications enables the student to claim exemption from any maths or English requirement as a component of a programme (e.g. an Apprenticeship)

4.5.3 Assessment outcomes will inform the content of the Individual Learning Plan, including any support needed for students.

5. Strategic priorities

1. We will ensure that we have competent staff that are able to provide students with high quality training and support in order to develop their maths and English skills.

   a. In order to ensure that we are able to provide effective support for our students, we will support staff to achieve Level 2 qualifications in maths and English, where they do not already hold relevant qualifications, in order that they are able to provide effective support to develop those skills within vocational programmes / apprenticeships.

   b. We will provide mandatory training for staff, and require them to undertake regular best practice exchange, in relation to embedding maths and English skills into all learning sessions.

   c. Trainers will be provided with feedback from observations and from verification/moderation activities, in relation to their embedding of maths and English, with measurable improvement actions implemented, where relevant.

d. Peer support will be used extensively in order to ensure that staff share approaches to developing skills and undertake joint problem solving to ensure best support for students.

e. Student voice feedback on maths and English support will be used to direct the development of staff.

2. Students are provided with information to support understanding of the importance of maths and English skills and the support available.

   a. All students will be provided with a thorough induction and IAG prior to programme commencement.

   b. All course information that is designed for and provided to students will include clear information on the maths and English skills development and support that we provide.

3. The planning and delivery of learning, including student feedback, have maths and English skills embedded throughout.

   a. Opportunities for the development of spelling, punctuation and grammar (SPaG) will be implemented within all learning activities. Section 7 details UCQ's arrangements for SPaG.

   b. All students will undertake a maths and English initial assessment in order to establish their current skills level and this will be used to inform the type and nature of development required (whether that be referral for development, or direct entry to a programme, with maths and English on-programme development).

   c. All schemes of work and session plans will include information on how maths and English are embedded into sessions.

   d. Individual Learning Plans will detail individual development for each student, with respect to maths and English skills, as well as vocational skills.

   e. Trainers will, at all times, highlight when and how they are practising/developing their maths and English skills whilst learning/during feedback on assessed work.

   f. Student feedback will include how they can develop their maths and English skills.

   g. Students will be set SMART targets to help them to improve their maths and English skills.

   h. Students will record new vocabulary and definitions and practise new vocabulary during learning sessions.

   i. Where appropriate, students will be set homework to develop their maths and English skills.

   j. Trainers will highlight maths and English errors in students' work.

k. IAG relating to progression will highlight opportunities to further develop maths and English skills through national qualification opportunities.

4. Quality assessment and improvement systems will be used to measure performance and drive improvement.

   a. All processes and activities relating to the review and quality assurance of learning provision will consider maths and English skills development, including but not limited to course validation, learning reviews, observation of assessment activity, internal moderation/verification, teaching staff inductions, student & employer feedback activities, self-assessment and staff appraisal and review.

   b. All processes relating to quality and performance improvement consider maths and English skills development, including but not limited to staff review and development plans, CPD schedules, best practice activity, continuous improvement planning and activity, and course review.

6. Impact measures

6.1 We will know when this policy is fully implemented when:

1. There is evidence that all students receive the support they require, based upon initial assessment and student review findings, and have been provided with information on a clear progression route to Level 2 in English and maths where not already achieved.

2. All staff understand how to embed English and maths in their teaching, learning and assessment planning and delivery and employ this routinely and effectively within their daily work.

7. SPaG (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar)

7.1 SPaG feedback is intended to support learning and confidence, not to penalise learners for errors. To ensure this support is fully embedded, all staff (including volunteers), tutors, trainers and assessors must consistently ensure that SPaG within learning and that learners are supported effectively to develop their written communication skills.

7.2 All trainers and assessors are required to ensure that English is (along with other functional skills) a continuous theme within learning and therefore the spelling, punctuation and grammar used within student and apprentice written work must also be reviewed and, where there are errors, be corrected. This should be addressed in line with Appendix A: FE Marking Procedure (SPaG).

7.3 Highlighting and responding to any student difficulties with SPaG

7.3.1 Our robust initial assessment process, which includes the determination of English skills and also assesses and responds to identified needs for learning support, should ensure that the correct level of support is already in place for students.

7.3.2 Where difficulties emerge that the trainer is able to support within the existing programme and class environment, they will discuss areas for development with the student and agree any required amendments to the learning plan in order to ensure that the student is able to fully participate and succeed in their chosen programme.

7.3.3 This can include the provision of self-guided learning activities, over and above the current course; provision of additional support from the tutor in the classroom; additional one to one tutorials to offer focused support and the increased use of IT in order to make use of dictionaries, spell checkers and grammar checkers, to aid learning.

7.4 Signposting students who require specialist help with SPaG

7.4.1 In the rare occurrence of a student that requires specialist help that has not been identified prior to their programme start, the trainer must meet with the student and undertake a full discussion in relation to the level of difficulty that has presented, and confirm a referral to the Programme Lead who will undertake further assessment of the student's support needs.

7.4.2 The team will work with the trainer, and the permission of the student, to develop a plan for support that enables the student to develop their English skills and undertake their programme of learning.

7.5 Monitoring of Trainer/Assessor Compliance

7.5.1 The SPaG curriculum is monitored by our Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) team, who will check compliance in the course of their sampling activities and whilst undertaking observation of assessment activity. It will also be monitored through internal audits and learning reviews.

7.5.2 It will also be a key focus of standardisation activities and of best practice activities, in order to drive consistency and continually improve skills and practice.

7.5.3 IQAs will lead the continued development of trainer/assessor teams in relation to SPaG and compliance with the Maths and English Strategy and SPaG work instructions will be determined through our programme of audit.

8. Initial equalities impact assessment

Department: All	**Completed by:** Tara Henderson, Head of Policy & Governance	**Date of initial assessment:** 15/02/21
Area to be assessed:	TLA-016 Maths and English Strategy	
Existing or new policy/procedure:	Existing	
What evidence has been used to inform the assessment and policy? (please list only)		
External guidance and requirements: ➢ Sector best practice ➢ Education Inspection Framework **Internal guidance and requirements:** ➢ Consultation with Head of Data and Quality		

1. Describe the aims, objectives or purpose of the policy/procedure		This strategy sets out UCQ's arrangements to ensure that we provide consistent and regular opportunities for our students to improve their skills in English and mathematics, embedding these skills so that they are developed and applied in all aspects of students' learning, providing a strong foundation upon which to build further learning, work and career advancement.		
2. Which stakeholders/groups are intended to benefit from this policy/procedure?		All students and staff		
The Equality Act 2010 requires public bodies to have 'due regard' to the need to:- (1) Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization (2) Advance equality of opportunity between different groups; and (3) Foster good relations between different groups		**3. Could the policy/procedure have a disproportionately negative effect impact in terms of the aims set out in (1) to (3) of the Act on any of the protected characteristics?:-** **High** **Medium** **Low** **No effect**	**4. Briefly explain how the policy/procedure furthers or prevents the aims set out in (1) to (3).**	**5. If there is a disproportionately negative impact on any protected characteristics, can it be justified on the grounds of promoting equality or any other reason? If yes, please explain.**
Protected characteristics	**Age**	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Disability	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Gender	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Gender reassignment	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Marriage and Civil Partnership	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Pregnancy and Maternity	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Race	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable
	Religion or Belief	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable

	Sexual Orientation	No effect	Not applicable	Not applicable

6. Has there been any consultation/engagement with the appropriate protected characteristics?		Not applicable as no PC impact identified
7. What action(s) will you take to reduce any disproportionately negative impact, if any?		None required
8. Based on the information in sections 1 to 7, should this policy/procedure proceed to Full Impact Assessment? (recommended if one or more 'High' under section 2)		No
Assessor signature:	**Approved by:** **Michelle Elliott**	**Date approved:** 15/02/21